

A MIXED MATING OF TWO SPECIES OF LIMENITIS FABRICIUS (LEPIDOPTERA, NYMPHALIDAE)

It seems worthwhile to record a very interesting case of inter-specific pairing that was brought to my attention some time ago. On 26 August 1957, In El Dorado, Ark., Mrs. H. E. Hanna noted a pair, consisting of a male *Limenitis archippus* (Cramer) and a female *L. arthemis astyanax* Fabricius, on a rubbish heap, joined in what seemed normal coition. On being caught, they separated. Mrs. Hanna sent the specimens to me, and very kindly presented them to the American Museum of Natural History, where they are now preserved in the collection.

Such mixed pairings in the wild are by no means unknown, but are very rarely reported properly, especially with preservation of both specimens. They are of great interest in studies of speciation, hybridization and behavior. Certainly all authentic records of this sort should be prominently published. Of even greater value would be to keep the specimens alive (when this is practicable), obtain a batch of eggs from the female and rear the offspring. Such facts should then be recorded as the number of eggs, the number of viable offspring, the numbers, appearances and food preferences of the larvae, pupae and adults, etc. Even more desirable would be to send the live female or eggs to someone versed in butterfly genetics.

The present instance is of particular interest because of the great color difference between the two species, *L. archippus* having departed radically from the coloration of its congeners to mimic *Danaus plexippus* L., the Monarch. We do not know, of course, what is the relative importance of this color difference in maintaining the normal segregation of the two species (which are very widely sympatric) as compared with their differences in genitalic structure, genetics, odor, courtship behavior and habitat.—ALEXANDER B. KLOTS, The City College of New York.